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CIA 5-01.3 (Invisible Gov't)

SOC 4-01.1 US (Freedom of Press)

SOC 4-01.2 US (Strategy of Deception)

GOUT 1-06.4 US

The Strategy Of Deception

Little by little the manner and degree to which ours, a free government, has copied the ways of the dictators are coming to light.

It is always a temptation to be a little bit of a dictator if the opportunity arises (and one can get away with it) and few there are who can resist it.

The public servant who closes a meeting at which public business is conducted is assuming one of the ways of a dictatorship. His salary is paid by the public and he is transacting the public's business. But he will tell you without blinking an eye that it is in the public interest that the meeting should be closed.

Father knows best, is his attitude.

There is, of course, managed news. Few public servants, indeed, are completely frank with the people whose business they manage and whose money they spend. A corporate manager who treated his board of directors or his stockholders the way many public servants treat the taxpayers would be fired out of hand. Then why do they do it? Because they can get away with it.

David Wise has written a fascinating book called "The Invisible Government" which details the manner in which such organizations as the Central Intelligence Agency and the United States Information Agency operate behind the scenes. The book is primarily a detailed account of the C.I.A.-sponsored invasion of Cuba in April, 1961. It is a story of incredibly bad planning, indecisiveness and faulty judgment. Its principal lesson seems to be that you can't fight a war secretly in a free country.

Ironically, the press in the eastern and southeastern United States, which knew all about the invasion preparations, kept silent at the request of Washington. More ironically, had the press done its duty the country almost certainly would have been saved from this fiasco.

Vance Packard has written another book, called "The Naked Society," which presents a rather horrifying picture of just how little privacy the individual any longer has in this country. Here it is not only government but business itself which pries loose every facet of the individual's personal life. If he doesn't submit to a lie detector test, at which the most intimate details of his behavior are questioned, he doesn't get the job.

More recently there was the case of "The Strategy of Deception." The United States Information Agency wanted to see this book published for distribution abroad. But the publisher would need to sell it also at home since the subsidy available to the U.S.I.A. was limited. At the same time Federal law forbids use of U.S.I.A. funds to subsidize material for domestic distribution.

Yet to issue the book from the Government Printing Office, would immediately stamp it as propaganda, which, of course, it was, so far as U.S.I.A. was concerned. U.S.I.A. needed an "authentic" book. So a deal was made with a publisher to buy 2,000 copies for distribution overseas. The publisher, of course, would then sell all he could at home.

"The Strategy of Deception" is described as a study in world-wide Communist tactics, and it may be highly desirable for all Americans and as many foreigners as we can induce to read. But the fact is that this book would never have come into being in its present form—as an independent study, though the U.S.I.A. censored it before publication—without Federal subsidy. And there is nothing whatever in the book to indicate that the Federal Government had anything to do with its publication.

This is just one more dabble by our government in the field of authoritarianism. The tendency seems to be growing. The lethargy of the public toward such intrusions on their right to know what their government is doing is monumental. Would it not be strange to discover some day that the Russians know more about their government's operation than we know about ours?